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## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: China SSM Rail Search

1. A meeting to discuss the China SSM rail search was held on the patio on 18 August at 1400. The purpose was to evaluate the special rail search and to discuss publication format for the search results. The community was represented by [redacted] and analysts from OSR and OBG. NPIC was represented by [redacted]

2. The meeting was unstructured and dealt with related missile topics as well as the specific SSM rail search. During the course of the discussion, NPIC was able to advance the following suggestions:

a. The SSM search should be conducted in each province as part of the regular MI scan. A map showing the areas searched on acceptable photography and a progress report would be published each spring, using the recent special SSM search map as a base. An interim report might be published each fall. The OBG representatives thought it would be possible to compute percentages of area coverage from these maps.

b. The publication date of the NIE on China's strategic weapons program should be changed to spring. This would enable the estimate to incorporate information from fall and winter coverage, the most productive times for satellite photography of China. In addition, this sequence would make it possible to provide the estimators with maximum coverage of China just prior to the publication of the estimate, since during this time of year a mission devoted mainly to China could be flown with minimum competition from USSR targets.

c. Some form of rail search might be continued if such a search could be incorporated into the existing IAS rail search for new rail lines and improvements to existing lines.

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d. If better signatures become available, it might be possible to do a rapid search of the rail lines for specific features such as rail-to-road transfer points.

3. The discussion disclosed considerable difference of opinion among analysts within OSR and within the community in regards to the validity of the present rail search requirement. OSR analysts are also divided over the likelihood of a deployed mobile MRBM system in China. The OSR analysts were intrigued by the NPIC Black Book item depicting operational training at Shuangchengtzu, but were unable to determine if this was training for the firing of missiles at prepared sites or from any available pad. The analysts were negative about the Hsuan-hua facility because they couldn't see why the Chinese would want to store missiles there.

4. The meeting brought out that the community has in no way refined its ability to predict probable areas of missile deployment and in fact may be less certain than ever. One new element is the USSR--previous calculations cranked in only the range to targets outside of Communist territory.

5. In conclusion, the meeting was essentially a fact-finding effort by OSR and no specific conclusions were drawn. However, the OSR representatives seemed receptive to the NPIC suggestions.

Executive Officer

Imagery Exploitation Group, NPIC

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